

Wednesday, January 7, 2004

## Teleconference on "Covering a Crisis" scheduled January 9

**T**he Indiana State Department of Health, the Hoosier State Press Association, and the Indiana Broadcasters Association will present a satellite teleconference, "Covering a Crisis: An In-Depth Look at the D.C. Sniper Shootings," on Friday, January 9, from 1:15 to 2:45 p.m.

This teleconference, which is funded by the ISDH bioterrorism grant, is aimed at the media, but local health departments, hospitals, mental health centers, emergency management departments, and other first responders are encouraged to take part.

The goal of this discussion is to bring into focus the special challenges these groups will all face in communicating vital information to the public in an emergency.

This program will feature Captain Nancy Demme of the Montgomery (Maryland) County Sheriff's Department. Demme was Chief Charles Moose's public information officer during the D.C. sniper shootings.

The other national guest will be Brian Flynn, retired U.S. Assistant Surgeon General (for mental health). Flynn is

completing a study of the media coverage of the sniper shootings and its effect on the communities involved, and will be able to discuss his findings during the teleconference.

The discussion will be moderated by Lee Giles, who recently retired after 35 years as News Director of WISH-TV in Indianapolis. Panelists will include Keith Robinson, Indiana A.P. bureau chief, and Hak Haskins, managing editor of the Dubois County *Herald*.

This program will be uplinked statewide over the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System (IHETS) and will be available at more than 40 downlink locations.

For more information, please contact



Still frame from video by Wade Kiffmeyer

Captain Nancy Demme of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Dept. (MD) addresses the media during the D.C. sniper shootings.

**Andy Zirkle**, Office of Public Affairs, at 317-233-7306. The satellite telecast will also be available on C-Band. Local health departments and other agencies may want to check with a nearby TV station or hospital to see if they can downlink it.

Viewers will be able to call in questions and comments during the telecast over a toll-free number.

## Vital Records has new office, expanded hours



Photo by Daniel Axler

Vital Records Deputy Registrar Mary Hinds checks out the pneumatic tube used for sending and receiving information and documents.

**W**ith a swish and a pneumatic tube, an application for a birth certificate comes from the new public **Vital Records Office** to the Vital Records area in the basement of the Indiana State Department of Health. About 20 minutes later, and with another swish, a certificate is sent up to the office and into the hands of the customer.

The Vital Records Office, which handles requests for birth and death certificates, marriage licenses, and adoption records, recently moved to a more accessible office area, expanded its waiting area, and extended its hours of operation.

The office is now at 6 West Washington, Indianapolis, and customers enter directly into the waiting area from Washington Street instead of going through the State Depart-

ment of Health lobby and signing in. The downtown office is located across from the Circle Centre Mall and is west of the intersection of Meridian and Washington streets. The expanded walk-in hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The waiting area has also been expanded into one large room instead of two smaller areas, said Mary Hinds, Vital Records deputy registrar and director of the records management section.

There is also now a small private room where Vital Records clerks can talk with customers wanting to discuss confidential issues.

Hinds said the new pneumatic tube is "like the banks have" and takes the applications from the customers on the upper level to the clerks on the lower level who check

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# Vital Records: 85,000 births, 50,000 deaths a year in Indiana

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the records and prepare the certificates.

"We have an intercom system, too, so we can let people know a tube is on its way so they don't bump into each other," she said.

Hinds said some 100 people visit the Vital Records Office daily. The fee for birth certificates is \$10 (which includes a \$2 Birth Problems Registry fee) and \$8 for death certificates.

**T**he information people are seeking comes from stacks and stacks of confidential records, most microfilmed, and databases of information collected by the ISDH's Vital Records Office. Barbara Stultz is the State Registrar and is keeper of the records.

There are some 47 people employed in the Vital Records office. They are responsible for entering and keeping track of data that come from hospitals, funeral directors, physicians, and local health departments and for searching all records for information legally requested.

"Any death or birth that occurs in Indiana is recorded in this office," Hinds said. "There are 85,000 births and 50,000 deaths yearly in Indiana."

Vital Records staff also make corrections and amendments to the records, such as correcting misspellings or adding paternity that originally was left blank.

Hinds said that Indiana began filing births in 1907 and deaths in 1900.

When a baby is born, hospitals type up the birth certificates and send them to the local health department and the state Vital Records Office, which then

**Indiana began filing births in 1907 and deaths in 1900.**

gives it a certificate number. The information and certificate number are entered into the Vital Records database and the certificate becomes available for issuing.

Vital Records also files adoption information for children born in Indiana or for children adopted in Indiana. When a child is adopted, and the court notifies Vital Records of the adoption, staff seal the original record. A new certificate is issued upon request and fee.

**T**he original birth information is not available except through the Indiana Adoption History Program. At age 21, an adoptee is eligible to register with the Indiana Adoption History Program and open the birth records if the birth parent(s) consent through the adoption program.

Vital Records is also responsible for keeping a Putative Father Registry, Hinds said. This registry allows a man who may be a child's father, but who is not married

to the child's mother when the child is born or who has not established paternity in court, to receive notice of adoption of a child he may have fathered. Posters, developed by the ISDH, outlining the procedures to register are displayed in hospitals.

She said there are 7,400 people in the registry, which has been in existence since 1994.

Hinds said funeral directors are responsible for filing death certificates and listing the cause of death. The death certificates are sent to the local health departments. Local health departments send the certificates to the Vital Records Office monthly.

**C**ause of death information is coded and sent to the National Center for Health Statistics. Cause of death information, as well as other database information, is available for research purposes to organizations like universities, corporations, or agencies through the Special Studies Program.

Marriage licenses are filed by the clerk of the court and Vital Records has kept an alphabetical database since 1958. This database is sent electronically to the genealogy department of the Indiana State Library and is available to the public.

The vault in the Vital Records Office holds thousands of

ledgers with births, deaths, and marriages listed by date and with the microfilm record number noted. When a search for information is requested, Vital Records will do a five-year search.

"We search the year asked for, two years before, and two years after because relatives don't always have the exact dates. When we find the name, we then go to the appropriate microfilm file," Hinds said.

**I**ndiana Code allows the state registrar to issue birth and death certificates upon request by any person only if the registrar is satisfied that the applicant has a direct interest in the matter or that the certificate is necessary for the determination of personal or property rights or for compliance with state or federal law.

Individuals considered to have a direct interest include parents, spouse/life partner, adult children, grandparents, siblings, aunts/uncles, direct descendents, children of aunts/uncles, or other family members as deter-



Photo by Daniel Axler

Staff in the Vital Records Office peer through the new customer service window into the waiting area. From left are Rosalie Conley, Vital Records clerk; Renee Scott, issuing supervisor; and Shaleen Johnson, mail supervisor.

mined by the state registrar.

Another responsibility of the Vital Records Office is to provide letters of certification for the Nurse Aide Registry. When a request for certification is received, Vital Records calls the appropriate ISDH program area and the letter of certification is sent to the Vital Records printer, and the letter is handed to the customer.

**B**irth and death certificates can also be obtained from local health departments or by faxing the required information to the Vital Records Office.

For more information on ordering birth and death certificates from the Indiana State Department of Health, go to the ISDH Web site at [www.statehealth.in.gov](http://www.statehealth.in.gov) by clicking on the Birth and Death Certificates button, or call 317-233-2700.



The *Indiana State Department of Health Express* is a biweekly publication for ISDH employees and stakeholders. Words in blue are links that you can access directly if you read the *Express* on-line. To submit news items, call (317) 234-2817 or send information to: ISDH *Express*, Office of Public Affairs, 2 N. Meridian St., Section 6G, Indianapolis, IN 46204-3003. Inquiries should be directed to:

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# Local Health Departments working on mass prophylaxis plans

**L**ocal health departments are in the midst of developing a three-phase Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Planning strategy for mass prophylaxis.

The Indiana State Department of Health **Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response Division**, which will receive the information from the local health departments, is offering guidelines and training for the completion of these plans.

According to the Preparedness and Emergency Response Division, the three phases to be completed are:

- ◆ Assessment
- ◆ Mass prophylaxis plan
- ◆ Receipt and distribution plan of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)

For each phase completed, local health departments will receive grants from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds that are available to the ISDH, health officials said.

Grant awards are:

- \$4,200 to each local health department after the assessment is completed;
- \$10,000 to each local health department after the mass prophylaxis plan is completed;
- \$100,000 to each health preparedness district to be distributed to the local health departments within the district when the SNS plan is completed.

The phase-one assessment packet is due electronically to the ISDH from the local health departments no later than January 16.

Health officials said the assessment includes information on the local health department's past mass prophylaxis experiences, the health department's preparedness of the SNS, and general information about infectious disease preparedness.

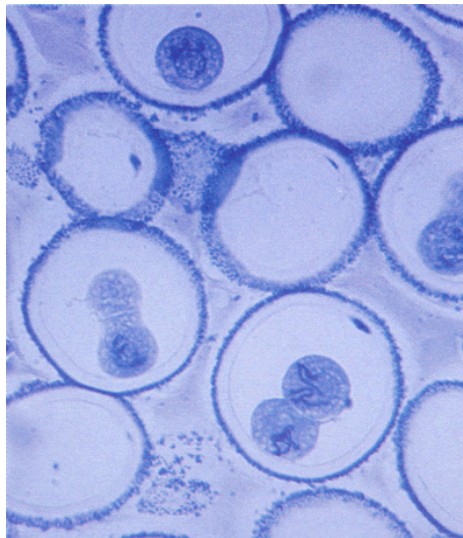
Local health departments will submit the four-page assessment through the ISDH Web portal. After the assessments are submitted, the processing for the first grant award will begin, a spokesperson for the Preparedness and Emergency Response Division said.

Once the assessments are completed, local health departments will submit a mass prophylaxis plan.

The overall goal set by the CDC is to develop a plan that will permit a local health department to provide prophylaxis for the entire population of their jurisdiction within a few days, health officials said.

According to the Preparedness and Emergency Response Division, mass prophylaxis can be described as the window of opportunity to ward off diseases for those who have been exposed to infectious agents.

To support local health departments as



they work on preparedness plans, the ISDH has prepared a detailed guidance document organized around chapter 11 of the CDC's official Stockpile Guidance manual.

SNS guidance areas include site selection, efficient clinic design, clinic operational issues, command and control, protection of special populations, and public communication. The ISDH guide is to be sent to local health departments in early January, officials said.

In addition, ISDH staff have developed support attachments to help the local health departments in the planning process. These attachments include access to demographic profiles, the Cornell University Weill Medi-

cal College computer staffing model, and contact lists for county emergency planning partners.

The ISDH guide is designed to help local health departments make the transition from arranging clinics that serve a few dozen clients to those designed to serve thousands, officials said.

The ISDH also will offer technical assistance to local health department representatives through a February 6 video conference via the Indiana Higher Education Telecommunications System (IHETS). The video conference will be from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Downlink sites, content, and presenters will be announced later.

The mass prophylaxis plans are due by early April. At the completion of this phase, the processing for the \$10,000 grant awards will begin.

The third phase, due by early June, is the development of a plan for the receipt and distribution of the SNS.

According to the Preparedness and Emergency Response Division, the SNS would be deployed only in the case of a large-scale event that depleted local and state supplies. In such a case, the Governor would issue a request for pharmaceuticals and other medical care supplies and equipment to the appropriate federal agency.

SNS supplies would arrive within 12 hours of the event, and the ISDH would distribute the supplies to the appropriate mass prophylaxis clinic sites.

## Assessment Submission Instructions

Local health departments have received detailed information through e-mail about how to submit the Assessment survey via the ISDH Web portal. Below is a shortened guide for local health departments. It is not intended to fully explain the process. Local health departments should carefully review the e-mail they received earlier for full instructions.

- ✓ Create a user account for the Web portal. This is a secure portal and requires a registration security code.
- ✓ Type in the security code and click "Register and Sign In Now."
- ✓ Click on the "Survey" tab.
- ✓ The on-line survey will be almost identical to the hard copy of the survey.
- ✓ Fill in the assessment information on each page.
- ✓ At the end of the page click "Save and Continue," which will automatically advance you to the next page.

At the last page, when you are finished, click "Save Page." If you are completely satisfied with your report and ready to send it, click the "Submit Survey" button. If you are not ready to submit, you need do nothing or click "Review Answers." You may return to the survey at any time before the January 16 deadline. Once you click the "Submit Survey" button, the assessment cannot be altered. If you have questions, contact Gabe Nunez at (317)234-2816 or [gnunez@isdh.state.in.us](mailto:gnunez@isdh.state.in.us). If you have problems accessing the file please call the computer help desk at 317-233-6911.

**Assessment surveys must be submitted by January 16.**

**Do NOT click the submit survey button until you are completely satisfied with your report.**

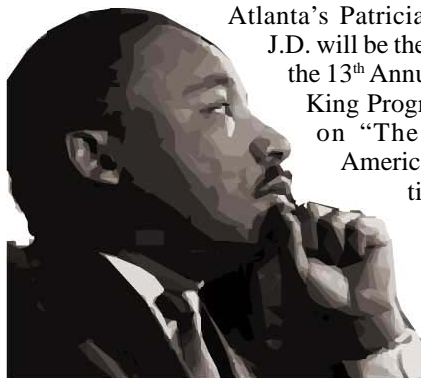
## Volunteerism, social justice, aid to the needy

# Tri-Celebration to mark Martin Luther King holiday

The dreams and hopes of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be remembered during ceremonies at the King Tri-Celebration at the Statehouse Rotunda and the Indiana Government Center Auditorium on Friday, January 16. The three-pronged event will focus on King's dream for social justice.

The Tri-Celebration is sponsored by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission and the Indiana Civil Rights Commission. The first event of the day will be the 2004 Dr. King Educational Youth Summit presentation of "The Right to Dream," featuring Living Voices from Seattle, Washington. This will begin at 9 a.m. at the Indiana Government Center Auditorium in downtown Indianapolis.

At noon in the Statehouse Rotunda,



Atlanta's Patricia Russell-McCloud, J.D. will be the keynote speaker for the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual State Employees' King Program. She will speak on "The Right to Dream: America's Struggles for Justice."

A unique feature of the celebration will be an opportunity for state employees to volunteer a day of service on the King state holiday, January 19. The call for volunteerism is billed as "A Day On ... Not a Day Off!"

State employees may sign up from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Statehouse Rotunda to volunteer at a variety of service organizations on January 19. Of course, state employees are encouraged to do volunteer work on January 19 whether or not they sign up on January 16. Organizers of the event

note that "service is a powerful strategy to honor the words and deeds of Dr. King."

As a way of reflecting on Dr. King's dream of helping mankind, the State Department of Health's [Office of Minority Health](#) is collecting new and gently used blankets, comforters, quilts, and pillows to give to the homeless as part of "In the Spirit of Giving."

Donated items may be taken to the drop-off box on the first floor of the ISDH, near the Federal Express pickup station. The donations will be taken to the Wheeler Mission and the Holy Family Mission on January 16. Items should be clean and in good condition.

For more information about the blanket collection, contact Tasha Smith-Bonds, Office of Minority Health, 317-233-7453.

## January is National Cervical Health Awareness Month

January is National Cervical Health Awareness Month. The start of a brand new year is a great time for women to think about taking care of their health.

Fortunately, cervical cancer is nearly 100 percent curable if it is caught early.

Even though there are effective ways to prevent and cure cervical cancer, not all women take advantage of these procedures or have access to quality healthcare. An estimated 300 new cases of cervical cancer will be diagnosed and 120 women will die from this disease this year in Indiana.

Risk factors for cervical cancer include:

- ▶ Smoking
- ▶ Having had more than one sexual partner
- ▶ Being diagnosed with HPV (human papillomavirus)
- ▶ Never having a Pap test or not having one in the past five years

Although cervical cancer occurs in women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds, African-American, Vietnamese, and Latino women have higher rates of this disease than white women.

Early detection, with the use of the Pap test, is the key to reducing mortality and late-stage cervical cancer. The Pap test is a gentle scraping of cells from the cervix or opening of the womb. The cells are placed on a slide and sent to a lab to be checked for abnormalities. The Pap test can actually detect pre-cancerous cells in the cervix, giving women the opportunity to receive treatment that could prevent them from getting cervical cancer. Regular Pap tests are recommended for women over age 18 as well as younger women who are sexually active.

Throughout the year, the Indiana State Department of Health Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IN-BCCP) provides free Pap tests to women aged 40-64 who are uninsured or underinsured and meet the program's income guidelines. The program also provides free mammograms (an x-ray to check for breast cancer) to eligible women aged 50-64.

Contact the "Indiana Family Helpline at 1-800-433-0746 for more information about the IN-BCCP including eligibility guidelines and participating medical providers in your community. Additional information may also be found on the Indiana State Department of Health's Web site, at [www.statehealth.in.gov](http://www.statehealth.in.gov), by clicking on Public Health Programs, then on Breast and Cervical Cancer Program.

## HIPAA

The Indiana State Department of Health has designated itself as a hybrid entity for HIPAA purposes. This means that some ISDH program areas are subject to HIPAA requirements, while other ISDH program areas are not. Covered programs within ISDH are the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, Children's Special Health Care Services, the Hemophilia Program, and the Medical Services Program in the Division of HIV/STD.

Program areas in hybrid entities subject to HIPAA may only disclose protected health information to other programs — covered or non-covered — as authorized or permitted under the HIPAA Privacy Rule, even when all program areas are within the same agency. This is the same guideline that applies to disclosures of protected health information from an ISDH-covered program to an outside agency.

The covered ISDH program disclosing protected health information is required to obtain authorization from the participant whose protected health information is to be disclosed, unless the disclosure under consideration is expressly permitted or required under the Privacy Rule.

The Office of HIPAA Compliance asks that ISDH staff remain sensitive to covered internal programs that are procedurally obligated to ensure that all disclosures are authorized or otherwise permitted before a request for protected health information is granted.

— Contributed by Lisa Mani,  
ISDH Privacy Coordinator